the upland areas of West Godavari District in Andhra Pradesh;

(d) whether any names are under consideration from that area for nomination; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) to (e) Reconstitution of the Tobacco Board is under active consideration of the Government. Under clause (e) of sub-Section 4 of Section 4 of the Tobacco Board Act, 1975, not more than ten members are to be appointed on the Board from amongst the tobacco growers, dealers, exporters, manufacturers and marketing/agricultural experts, of which the grower members shall not exceed six. Government have initiated consultations to notify members of the Tobacco Board including grower members whose terms have expired.

Recommendation of Tobacco Board

1775. SHRI S. AUSTIN : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether any recommendations of Tobacco Board have been accepted by Commerce Ministry in 1994; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) Government have approved Budget estimates for 1994-95 on the recommendations of the Tobacco Board. Schemes prepared by the Board which are being implemented in 1994 include the operation of the auction system in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, schemes for better quality and yield of VFC tobacco, improving curing and storage facilities, improved grading, control and monitoring of pesticide residues, raising of nurseries, and development of new areas for FCV tobacco. Government have also approved of the Tobacco Board's proposal to construct an auction platform at Kaligiri in Andhra Pradesh.

Encouragement to Cigar Industry

1776. SHRI V. RAJAN CHELLAPPA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Tobacco Board has made any effort to encourage the traditional cigar making industry in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether it is a fact that Tabacco Board has not actively assisted tobacco growers involved in this sector?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) Some steps taken by Tobacco Board to help the traditional cigar making industry in Tamil Nadu include :—

1. Arranging publicity for Indian cigar tobacco by display of samples at international exhibitions;
2. Propagating Indian cigar tobacco through mailing of colour brochures to importers in various countries;
3. Despatch of cigar tobacco samples to interested importers;
4. Promotion of cigar exports to Malaysia and Indonesia during the visit of trade delegations to these countries;
5. Helping to conduct a study by Scientists of Central Tobacco Research Institute aimed at improving quality of Indian cigars and cigar tobacco.

(c) Tobacco Board is inter-alia charged with the responsibility of promoting production of Virginia Tobacco Traditional cigar making tobacco would not, therefore, fall in its purview.

Tobacco Based Cigar Industry

1777. SHRI V. RAJAN CHELLAPPA : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Commerce Ministry has taken note of the tobacco-based cigar industry and its export potential in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details of steps taken to encourage this sector;

(c) whether it is a fact that Commerce Ministry has agreed to restrict the growth of cigar industry; and

(d) if so, the details of legislation being introduced with the concurrence of Commerce Ministry to restrict the growth of cigar industry and exports of cigars?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) Some steps taken to encourage the cottage sector based cigar industry in Tamil Nadu include :

(i) Abolition of excise duty on cigars;

(ii) Import of quality cigar wrappers/filler tobacco for use in export production of cigars permitted under the duty exemption scheme;

(iii) Arranging publicity in international trade exhibitions besides promotion during the foreign visits of trade delegations.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal to restrict the production for exports of cigars.

US Restrictions on Import of Tobacco Products

1778. SHRI V. RAJAN CHELLAPPA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that USA has imposed restrictions on the import of cigars, tobacco and other tobacco products from India; and

(b) if so, the details of such restrictions on exports from India to USA?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) A minimum domestic content requirement of 75% was prescribed in US legislation governing cigarette production in USA, in 1993.

Export of Plantation Crops

1779. DR. B. B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what were the targets set for export of plantation crops during the last three years;

(b) how far these targets have been achieved; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to boost export of plantation crop?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) COFFEE targets fixed for export of coffee during the last three years were as follows:

Year	Quantity (tonnes)	Value (Rs./crores)
1991-92	120,000	400
1992-93	120,000	400
1993-94	110,000	460

The actual exports of coffee during the last three years were as follows:

Year	Quantity (tonnes)	Value (Rs./crores)
1991-92	111 452	349.01
1992-93	113.602	381 31
1993-94	135 608	581.79

In order to boost export of coffee, in 1994 a Free Sale Quota (FSQ) up to 50% of production has been granted to the coffee growers under which the producer can sell his produce both in domestic and export market. The Coffee Board has also combined the domestic and export auctions so that export requirements can be adequately met.

TEA: The target set for export of tea during hte last three years vis-a-vis the achievements thereof are as follows:

Quantity (M. Kgs.)
Value (Rs./crores)

Year	Targets Quantity	Targets Value	Achievements Quantity	Achievements Value
1991-92	210	1200	216.45	1212.27
1992-93	210	1200	180.69	1058.70
1993-94	210	1200	*161.17	*1080.10

*Estimated.

In order to step up export of Indian tea discussions have been held with Russian authorities requesting them to source their requirements of tea from India under debt repayment route. According to the information available, Russian authorities have allocated around US $ 50 million to various importing organisations in that country for import of Indian tea. Efforts are on to sort out bottle-necks in export of tea to Iran.

Besides these, other steps which are being taken to boost exports of tea include promotional campaigns through Tea Board's offices abroad. It consists of (i) participation in trade fairs/exhibitions, (ii) media campaign to increase consumer awareness towards various unique characteristics of Indian tea, (iii) media campaign to popularise Indian tea through Tea Board marketing symbol, and (iv) support to various foreign brands containing Indian tea. A part of the expenditure incurred by importers for promotional campaigns is met from tea Board budget.

Tea Board have also undertaken Darjeeling and Assam logo campaign in U. K. to popularise classic Indian teas. Recently the brand promotion scheme has been revived to give a boost to exports of value added teas.